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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PREL PGOV SU

SUBJECT: Turabi to S/E Natsios: NATIONAL UNITY GOVERNMENT ON ROCKY GROUND

¶11. (SBU) Summary: In an October 6 meeting with Special Envoy Natsios, Dr. Hassan al-Turabi of Sudan's Popular Congress Party talked about North/South relations and Darfur possible developments. End of summary.

¶12. (SBU) Al-Turabi claimed that people expected improvements in their lives after the peace agreement, but have not seen any. S/E Natsios disagreed and pointed to a number of improvements - like the presence of schools and teachers from Kenya there - "Improvement is happening, but is not noticed," he said. Turabi added that the expectation that the CPA would radically transform life and politics in Sudan had not happened and may never happen.

¶13. (SBU) Al-Turabi described the situation in Sudan as "tense." He charged that the government rules by dictate without regard to the constitution. "They may listen to people, (but) then vote whatever they like." He said that federalizing and decentralizing the country would ease the tension, adding that Darfur (problem) was about "decentralization." Neither the federal legislature nor state assemblies have real power. There is no transparency or accountability, the CPA could have addressed the problems of marginalization in all of Sudan, but instead is a vehicle for southern secession not democracy for all Sudan. He described Darfur as a "disadvantaged" area with no judicial system, no police and no facilities.

¶14. (SBU) Al-Turabi expressed his discontent that the upcoming talks about Darfur will take place in Tripoli noting that Libya had a long history of interference in Darfur. S/E Natsios said the U.S. didn't choose Tripoli, but the Libyans are deeply involved in the war. "If we don't involve them they will undermine the process." The S/E added that his goal is "to have peace so we don't have another war." Asked if there will be a peace agreement, Al-Turabi dodged the question saying that the talks should include all Darfurians because if they don't participate, "another explosion would happen."

¶15. (SBU) In response to a question from S/E Natsios if the GOS's power is getting stronger, Al-Turabi said that the government's power is becoming weaker and is very unpopular. "All the opposition parties have one program and that is an anti-government program." He noted that the government of National Unity between the NCP and SPLM was a failure: "this is not a coalition, this is two people put together in a jail cell by force." He added "I should know because I've been in such cells." He noted that Khartoum's writ is abandoned in the south, "they are independent in all but name," and the SPLM cared little about federal rule, "they are disconnected from the North and don't try to hide it."

¶16. (SBU) Asked if he planned to run in the 2009 elections, Al-Turabi ruled out his party boycotting the elections but that he himself would not run for president. He added that he wanted the younger generation of his party to take an active part in the elections. He added that the NCP had succeeded in corrupting the judiciary, police

and local government with oil wealth. He described the recent extension in detention of the Mubarak al-Fadel alleged "coup Plot" conspirators as "completely illegal."

¶7. (SBU) S/E Natsios didn't have the opportunity to clear this message prior to departure.

FERNANDEZ